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ABSTRACT

This document provides descriptions of employment interventions as a resource for use in initiating or expanding employment services for individuals with disabilities. The document presents abstracts of 40 employability/employment interventions and practices currently in use by independent living programs throughout the United States. The abstracts include a brief description of the employment services offered, geographic area served, populations served, staff, funding source, and program effectiveness. The abstracts are accompanied by the names (or position titles), addresses, and telephone numbers of people who are available to answer questions about the described interventions. A "Table of Programs" identifies those programs serving a specific disability group or providing a specific type of service. (JDD)

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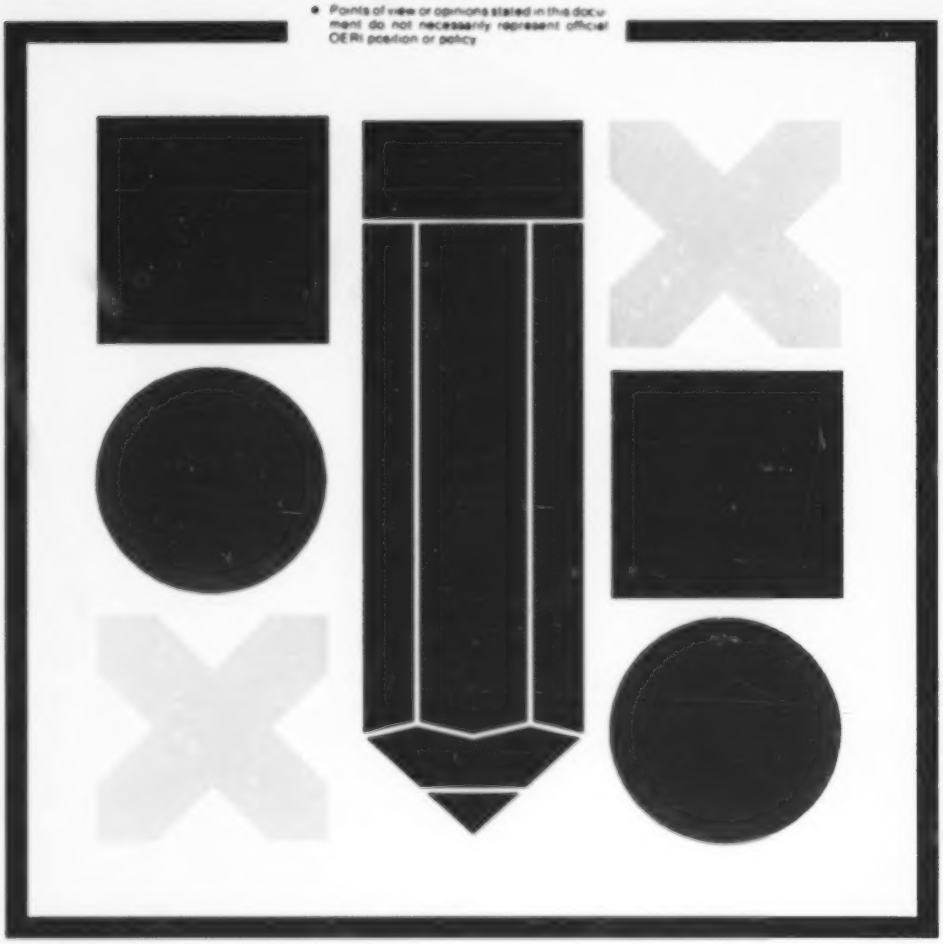

Employability and Employment Approaches

Currently Practiced in Independent Living Programs

Bob Means
Sandra Parkerson Kathy Estelle

Arkansas Research & Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation • University of Arkansas at Fayetteville • Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

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A Resource Document

Bob Means
University of Arkansas Research and Training Center
in Vocational Rehabilitation

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS:

Sandra Parkerson
University of Arkansas Research and Training Center
in Vocational Rehabilitation

Kathy Estelle
Mainstream Living
Little Rock, Arkansas

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Responding to surveys is usually a difficult task as well as an added burden even if the response is simple. In the case of accurately describing a service program, the task is not easy. Consequently, we wish to express our appreciation to all the ILPs and their representatives for their writings, editing, answering questions and the other processes involved in getting these program descriptions together. Special thanks to Janice Irwin for competently keeping up with the administrative mechanics of this project from start to finish as well as the actual typing. Thanks also to Mary Drevdahl for her final editing skills and recommendations on making the document easy to use.

Introduction

This document is a collection of abstracts of employability/ employment interventions and practices currently in use by independent living programs (ILPs) throughout the United States. The abstracts are accompanied by the names (or position titles), addresses, and/or telephone numbers of people who are available to answer questions about the described interventions. The purpose of this document is to provide descriptions of the employment interventions as a resource for ILPs in the process of initiating or expanding employment services.

While this document, hopefully, provides an accurate reflection of current employment practices of ILPs, this cannot be assured. The entries are not drawn from a random sample of ILPs, but rather, represent 40 programs from the total population of ILPs (identified through different mailing lists) who (a) acknowledged providing employability/employment services which they viewed as worthy of sharing, (b) were willing to share them, and (c) followed through in the preparation of the abstracts. Of the 506 ILPs contacted, 188 responded. Of these 188, 64 stated they were providing employability/employment services which they felt were worthy of sharing with other ILPs, and were willing to share them. From this group of 64, 40 actually completed the necessary steps leading to the inclusion of the abstract in the document. While this document represents only 40 of more than 500 ILPs, it is the only document of its kind in existence. Additionally, not all ILPs provide employment services. It is estimated that approximately 25 percent of ILPs provide a significant level of employability/employment services (Means & Bolton, 1992).

The employment services described in this publication were successfully operating in some ILP setting in this country at the time of the survey. Although the quality of the programs, or even the replicability of the services cannot be assured, these are employment programs that the users highly valued. Given that ILPs face some constraints (e.g., serving persons with very severe disabilities, low funding base) not faced by many employability service providing entities, the service methods

contained in this document may be more appropriate for ILP settings than the methods used in more conventional employability service settings.

The employability service descriptions contained in this resource document vary greatly. Some of the entries reflect complex employment programs. Some are simply good ideas that have been brought to fruition in a simple and economical way. Some entries describe a way of doing business in a rural area, others, urban and suburban. Some of the interventions would demand a significant time and/or money investment; others appear to be usable with little or no burden on resources. In many instances the service providers appear to have very effectively overcome barriers that anyone would face in the provision of employability services. ILP staff interested in initiating or expanding employment services would probably benefit from the experience of those who have been through program implementation.

If it is assumed that the ILPs are responding to unmet needs, it is of interest to identify the areas of service commonality among the programs. Services such as employability skills development (especially job seeking skills) and placement are frequently described by the sample. Such services would ostensibly be considered primary in most conceptions of employment services. Has the established rehabilitation system failed to make these services available in some communities or to some populations? Or, are the ILPs collaborating or competing with the established rehabilitation system? Many questions remain unanswered. While the descriptions do create some questions, an effort was made to address typical areas projected to be of interest to users of this document. In addition to including a brief description of the employment services offered, respondents were asked to include information on type of geographic area, populations served, required staff, funding source, and program effectiveness. Most of the descriptions include responses to these inquiries.

To help the reader identify programs of specific interest, the Table of Programs identifies them as serving a specific disability group or providing a specific type of service. These *special features* of the programs are also printed below the heading of each abstract. The special

features referenced are not comprehensive but will serve as a quick guide to selected features of a program.

The writing style and level of detail among the abstracts vary. Some abstracts were provided by the ILP staff, some were adapted from previously written descriptive materials, and others were developed from telephone interviews or some combination of methods.

Table of Programs

VI: Targets Visual Disability
HE: Targets Hearing Disability
MH: Targets Mental Health Disability
DD: Targets Developmental Disability
R: Residential Facility
V: Program Uses Volunteers
PC: Peer Counseling

GS: Goal Setting
JDS: Job Development Skills
JAS: Job Acquisition Skills
JPS: Job Placement Services
OST: On-site Training/Coaching
JTF: Job Tracking/Follow-up
ES: Employer Services

PAGE	CENTER	SPECIFIC DISABILITY				SPECIAL FEATURES			EMPLOYMENT RELATED SERVICES						
		VI	HE	MH	DD	R	V	PC	GS	JDS	JAS	JPS	OST	JTF	ES
6	Ability Center of Greater Toledo						✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
8	Ability Resources								✓	✓	✓			✓	
9	Access Alaska											✓	✓		
10	Accessible Space					✓				✓					
11	Adult Independence Development Center											✓			✓
13	Allen County League for the Blind	✓								✓	✓				
14	Briarwood Center for Independent Living						✓				✓				
15	California Association of the Physically Handicapped								✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
16	Capital District Center for Independence						✓	✓			✓				
17	Center for Independence		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓			✓	
18	Center for Independent Living in Central Florida										✓				✓
19	Center for Independent Living of North Florida					✓				✓	✓	✓			
20	The Center for People With Disabilities	✓	✓			✓								✓	✓
21	Chesire Home					✓						✓	✓	✓	✓
22	Community Living Services for the Developmentally Disabled				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	
23	Courage Center					✓			✓						

24	Dawn Enterprises					✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26	Disabled Resource Services				✓						✓				✓
26	Down East Employment Services								✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
28	Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
28	Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living							✓							
29	Hope Haven Residential and Work Training Program			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
31	IMPACT Center for Independent Living									✓	✓	✓			✓
32	Independent Skills Program		✓								✓	✓		✓	
33	Jespy					✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	
34	Mainstream Living	✓			✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
35	Motivational Services			✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
36	New Vistas Independent Living Center								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
37	Northern Regional Center for Independent Living										✓				✓
38	PARAQUAD		✓							✓	✓	✓			✓
39	Progressive Independence								✓		✓	✓			
40	The Resource Center for Accessible Living								✓	✓		✓	✓		
41	San Antonio Independent Living Services							✓							✓
42	Self Initiated Living Options						✓		✓		✓				
43	Services for Independent Living										✓				
44	Together Place			✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
46	Urban/Rural Center for Independent Living of Michigan Commission for the Blind	✓	✓								✓			✓	
47	Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired	✓					✓			✓	✓				✓
48	Vision Foundation	✓					✓			✓					
49	The Whole Person						✓						✓		

The Ability Center of Greater Toledo (ACT)

✓ V, GS, JDS, JAS, JPS, JTF, ES

The Ability Center of Greater Toledo is a large nonresidential independent living center serving an urban area of Ohio. It is funded through endowment, fund raising and grants. The original program was funded through a U.S. Department of Education grant.

The Center developed its own employment intervention. The Job Preparation and Selective Placement Program is a comprehensive and flexible placement program designed to meet the individual needs of persons with severe disabilities in their efforts to obtain competitive, community-based employment. The ACT Job Preparation and Selective Placement Program's services are designed to focus on the abilities, skills, and interests of each program participant as the basis of job development. Each participant's program is customized to provide the information, guidance, and support the person requires to obtain and maintain employment.

The following services are provided in the Job Preparation and Selective Placement Program:

Job Preparation. Participants are given assistance in exploring vocational interest areas and local employment opportunities related to their vocational goals in both individual and group settings. Job preparation activities are customized in relation to the needs and work experience of each person. These activities may include job site visits and interviews with both disabled and nondisabled employees in order to help participants "reality test" their goals and work expectations as well as increase their understanding of the attitudes and skills valued by employers. If participants have independent living needs (such as housing, attendant care, budgeting skill training, fitness and leisure activities) they are addressed prior to the job search through referral to the appropriate ACT or other community program. The ACT peer support program may be recommended to participants who feel that a mentoring relationship would be helpful. Clients who receive SSI or SSDI benefits are given information on the effect of employment upon these benefits. If a placement program participant will also be a client of the ACT Rehabilitation Technology Program, both services can be coordinated in a team approach.

Job Seeking Skill Training. Participants observe and practice the skills required to apply and interview for employment. Local employers evaluate participants on these skills and provide feedback to participants. Cover letter and resume design assistance is provided.

Personal Development. Training in achieving and maintaining a professional appearance appropriate to the participant's vocational goal is provided. This service may include helping the participant with wardrobe purchase and coordination, makeup, and hairstyle consultation. Attention is also given to the enhancement of the participant's social, interpersonal and communication skills.

Job Development and Selective Placement. Marketing efforts emphasize the skills and abilities each participant brings to the job. Job restructuring may be negotiated if required to accommodate disability. Employers are informed of the incentive programs available to employers of persons with disabilities. The placement specialist may schedule interviews and accompany participants if needed.

Follow-up Services. Contact is maintained with both the employee and the employer for six months following placement in order to provide support and any intervention which may be required to maintain employment.

Referral information may be given over the telephone by the Rehabilitation Service Commission (RSC) Counselor. ACT staff schedule the intake interview with the client. Desired background information includes work evaluation reports, medical and psychological information, and vocational goal plan.

Persons with disabilities who wish to be employed in the greater Toledo area are eligible. Persons with disabilities who are referred by the Ohio RSC may obtain placement services under the contract agreement with that agency. Persons referring themselves will receive information about funding sources for placement services.

The staff required for the program are a program director who is half-time and a full-time job developer. The program has been successful in it's placements and is seen as helping the community develop a coordinated and cooperative placement approach.

For more information contact:

Nancy Gabalac
Vocational Services Director
5605 Monroe Street
Sylvania, OH 43560
(419) 885-5733
(419) 882-2387 TDD

Ability Resources

✓ GS, JDS, JAS, JTF

Ability Resources is a nonresidential independent living center serving metropolitan Tulsa and surrounding areas in a five county region. The Center is primarily funded through grants from the United States Department of Education, Tulsa Area United Way, and private foundations.

The goal of Ability Resources is to teach independent living skills which assist individuals with disabilities to gain and maintain personal independence. Employment readiness skills are part of the independent living skills curriculum.

Consumers are referred to Ability Resources by various agencies and organizations. These entities include the Social Security Administration, the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services, acute rehabilitation facilities, community help lines, and other service delivery organizations.

After referral, the consumers work with an independent living counselor or other qualified staff who evaluates their situation. If job acquisition skills are needed the counselor works with them on completing job applications, interview techniques, and other related aspects.

Ability Resources does not offer job placement. The counselors do refer consumers to any job opening of which they are aware. It is the consumer's responsibility to interview for the job. If the consumer is having problems on the job, a counselor will assist him/her in solving the difficulty.

Ability Resources will assist any individual with a disability in job readiness skills or job seeking techniques. The staff consists of two full-time independent living counselors and several part-time employees who provide assistance. The program is tailored to each individual's personal situation and has no set time limit.

For more information contact:

Steve Cowden
Executive Director
1724 E. 8th Street
Tulsa, OK 74104
(918) 592-1235

Access Alaska, Inc.

✓ JPS, OST

Access Alaska is an independent living center in Anchorage, Alaska. Due to the limited number of qualified people for staff positions, the Center has developed a program that entails independent living skills training to enable people with disabilities to fill these positions. The Center provides a two-week, in-service training session that involves training in the service delivery system, skill requirements, role-playing for independent living skills, and information and referral.

The Center receives no special funding for the training programs and serves a large population encompassing rural and urban communities. The Center receives federal, state, and local monies as well as private donations. The Center recruits all disability types for its staff training program and reports a 70% success rate. Some of the referrals come from the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. There are two full-time staff persons who do the actual training and one full-time staff person who provides ongoing support for the trained staff.

For more information contact:

Dustin Farmer
Program Supervisor
3210 Woodland Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517
(907) 248-4777

Accessible Space, Inc.

✓ R, JDS

Accessible Space is a small, residential independent living center serving an urban/suburban area of Minnesota. Funding for the program is received from the Hennepin County Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals Program (CADI).

The program is designed to assist individuals with traumatic brain injuries and other physical disabilities. Each client is assigned an independent living skills worker who meets with the client on a regular basis to assist in developing and refining the clients independent living skills, provide information and referral for services not provided by the IL worker, and to provide ongoing support for community living.

Training occurs in the individual's own home or apartment. Skill building is tailor made to the specific needs of the person, and can be focused in a variety of areas, vocational, personal, educational, social, etc. Clients work at their own pace in conjunction with CSW, CADI workers, and IL workers, leaving the program open-ended for client length of participation.

Careful assessment of client abilities and eligibility is important to maintain a successfully operating program.

For more information contact:

David Piltz
Associate Director
2550 University Avenue W, Suite 301 N
St. Paul, MN 55114

Adult Independence Development Center (AIDC)

✓ JPS, ES

AIDC is a medium sized independent living center in an urban area (Silicon Valley, CA). AIDC is funded by the State Department of Rehabilitation, Santa Clara County United Way, client fees for services, and private grants and donations.

AIDC has two employment interventions which are described here: Bay Area Coalition for the Employment of Persons With Disabilities (BACED) and BAC-NET, a computerized network linking BACED agencies for the purpose of sharing job leads and sending electronic information and messages. Deborah Stern of DeAnza College was the crèator of BACED and AIDC is one of the founding members of the Bay Area Coalition. The State Department of Rehabilitation regularly attends the monthly BACED meetings and is also on-line with BAC-NET.

BACED is a coalition of agencies dedicated to increasing competitive employment of individuals with disabilities. The fourteen agencies which comprise BACED meet regularly to share information and resources. Goals and objectives of BACED agencies include identifying job opportunities by coordinating efforts with Bay Area employers, promoting awareness of disability issues by providing information and speakers to employers, and assisting employers in their efforts to develop more effective affirmative action programs. BACED agencies serve people with all types of disabilities. Resources necessary to create a coalition like BACED are minimal. The idea is to share resources and information which each agency already has in place. BACED has been so effective in its cooperative approach to meeting the needs of disabled job seekers that in 1991 it was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the California Governor's Committee for Employment of Disabled Persons.

BAC-NET was designed to enhance the efforts of BACED by providing a computerized job placement network where agencies could list job opportunities for disabled job seekers. Originally there were 10 agencies on-line inputting jobs. Today, 14 local nonprofit and state agencies utilize BAC-NET. Equipment and training for the BAC-NET computerized job placement network was obtained through a grant by Apple Computer. Total amount of the grant was estimated at $80,000. Equipment included 11 Macintosh computers with printers and software for ten agencies. Additionally, a two-day training program in computer operations was provided by Apple Computer for each agency involved in the BAC-NET project. BAC-NET proved to be such an innovative approach to

job placement that it received national recognition by winning the 1991 Computerworld Smithsonian Award for Government and Nonprofit Organizations.

BACED and BAC-NET have been utilized successfully to increase the potential of job placement for persons with disabilities. Interagency cooperation and the use of computer technology can contribute positively in assisting disabled job seekers to enter the work force. Each ILC should assess its needs individually. A computerized job placement network can only be effective if the agencies participating in it are willing and able to share resources.

For more information contact:

Nick Trawinski
Director of Counseling Services
1190 Benton Street
Santa Clara, CA 95050
(408) 985-1243

Allen County League for the Blind, Inc. (ACLB)

✓ VI, JDS, JAS

The ACLB is a small ILC serving both rural and urban areas. ACLB currently has two employment related programs. The first is a Job Accommodation program relating to ADA, Title I, and the second is a school-to-work transition program called the Summer Youth Initiative for Older Teens. Both programs were developed by the agency. The Summer Youth Initiative is available only in an urban area (Allen County) due to restrictions by the funding source. The agency is funded by a Title VII, Part B grant, donations, fees for services, local and state grants and some interest from investments.

The Job Accommodation program serves any person with a disability who needs on-site assistance in identifying and locating job accommodations. It had a first year annual budget of $56,122, has a full-time staff member assigned, and is available throughout the year. A major component is public education which takes the form of workshops and presentations. Evaluation is based on the results of stated program goals, objectives, and supportive activities as well as consumer assessments of the program. This program started in January of 1992, so success rates are not yet available. It is funded with Part B dollars, a one-year state vocational rehabilitation grant, and a one-year local foundation grant. At the end of the first year it will become a fee-for-service program to employers.

The Summer Youth Initiative is entering its second year and has been expanded from just summer jobs to include several work-related components. Students age 14 and 15 are involved in at least six work experiences including job shadowing, a four-session job-seeking skills class, and actual summer jobs in the community. The ACLB contracts with a local rehabilitation facility for job development and job coaches to assist in the summer jobs. Job accommodation assistance is provided by the ACLB. Priority is given to children who are blind/visually impaired with others served as space is available. The above components of the summer program have a budget of $8,512 and use three ACLB staff members on a part-time basis. The program is evaluated on the results of individualized objectives established by participants, parents, educators, and ACLB staff members. In 1991, 50 percent of the objectives were accomplished with a goal of 80 percent accomplishment in 1992. Funding is provided through a local foundation.

For more information contact:

Julie Garshwiler
Program Director
5800 Fairfield, Suite 210
Fort Wayne, IN 46807
(219) 745-5491

Briarwood Center for Independent Living

✓ V, JAS

Briarwood Center for Independent Living is a small nonresidential Center serving a rural area of Florida. It is funded by the State of Florida and federal grants.

The employability intervention used at the Center is a Job Readiness Program. Clients are taught the skills necessary to write a resume and cover letter, and fill out a job application. Job interview skills are taught and practiced. Clients are coached on how to dress for an interview. The program lasts for six weeks and meets twice a week for two-hour sessions. There are from 10-15 clients in each group. The program is designed to address anything the client might need to know or do in order to get a job. In some cases the skills are taught on an individual basis. When Center personnel determine that a client is job ready, s/he is referred to rehabilitation for placement.

The Center receives its client referrals from various sources, including the Department of Rehabilitation, the United Way, Social Services, and individuals.

The staff required for the program is minimal. The University of Florida is nearby and volunteers from the university teach the Job Readiness Program.

For more information contact:

Bill Parker
Executive Director
1023 SE 4th Avenue
Gainesville, FL 32601
(904) 378-7474

California Association for the Physically Handicapped (CAPH)

✓ **GS, JDS, JAS, JPS, JTF, ES**

CAPH's Independent Living Center is a nonresidential center serving Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties in California.

The employment intervention used by the Center is the CAPH's Vocational Services Program. The goal of the program is to successfully meet the employment needs of individuals with disabilities and local employers. Job development specialists work directly with clients and employers to make the best possible match and ensure a long-term employment relationship.

The Center provides vocational counseling, vocational assessment, career exploration, and goal setting. Job seeking skills instruction is provided. When the client is ready, s/he is placed on the job. Postemployment follow-up and counseling are provided.

Interpreter services, information on adaptive aides, and worksite accommodations are provided to the client as needed. The Center provides these services at no charge to client or employer. The program is funded through a combination of state and United Way dollars. The staff required for the vocational services program are two job development specialists.

The client population served is adult (18 years and over) persons with disabilities. The length of time a client remains in the program is based on individual needs. The program has proven to be very successful, achieving an 80 percent placement success.

For more information contact:

Mary Anne Bonqioanni
Executive Director
1617 E. Saginaw, Suite 109
Fresno, CA 93704-4458
(209) 222-2274 TDD (209) 222-2396
FAX (290) 222-1309

Capital District Center for Independence

✓ V, PC, JAS

The Capital District Center for Independence is a large independent living center in an urban area of Albany, New York. It is a state and federally funded facility.

The Center has two employment interventions. The first is a Job Seeker Support Group initiated to give support to people with disabilities who are looking for jobs. A rehabilitation counselor is "on loan" to the Center to facilitate the group. The focus of the group is on identifying job opportunities. They use the newspapers, the library, and any other source they can find to identify job leads. They develop job applications, resumes, and interview skills. Any kind of support a member needs in order to get a job is given by the group. The group size varies, but the core group is usually six or seven members.

A newsletter and word-of-mouth are used to publicize the group. It meets weekly for three to four months. The only prerequisite is that the members be job ready. They can refer themselves to the group.

The second employment intervention is a Job Readiness Training Workshop. A placement specialist from a local agency for the blind is the volunteer group leader. The workshop is a 13-week program. It meets once a week for three hours. Subjects such as how to identify job leads, participating in an interview, job follow-up, and resume writing are taught and discussed during the course. Information about career moves is given for persons wishing to change jobs or move up in an organization.

The Center charges for attending the Job Readiness Training Workshop. However, no one is turned away. The fee covers the cost of the materials, but its primary value is as an incentive for members to attend. The group is limited to 13 people.

Programs such as these require few resources. The group leaders are either volunteers or on loan. The director of the Center monitors the program but leaves management largely to the leaders. The client population recommended for the intervention is unemployed, job ready people with disabilities.

The Center staff report that the program is very successful.

For more information contact:

Todd Eggert
Executive Director
845 Central Avenue
Albany, NY 12206
(518) 459-6422

Center for Independence

✓ **HE, MH, DD, JDS, JAS, JTF**

Center for Independence is an independent living center with two offices: one in Puyallup, Washington and the other in Olympia, Washington. The Center has developed two vocational programs which it offers to its large rural and urban community. The traditional employment service program offers vocational skill development in the areas of employment interviewing skills, work ethics, and vocational and community assessment. This program targets all disability groups except visual impairment which is targeted by an existing community-based organization. The second program is a supported employment program that utilizes job coaches to serve mental health consumers.

The success rate for the traditional employment services program is 80 percent, and the Center believes that it is due to the many opportunities in the community. The supportive employment success rate is about 50 percent. These programs do not receive any special funding. The services are fee based and are paid by either the public school system, the Veterans Administration, or the Division of Rehabilitation Services. Working with the school district, the fee-for-service is written into the consumer's Individual Service Plan. The Center reports that being aware of and using the language used by the Division of Rehabilitation (i.e., client versus consumer) helps eliminate miscommunication when establishing the fee-for-service. The Center utilizes marketing strategies when attempting to influence potential service organizations to pay the fee for service.

For more information contact:

Irene Hughes
Director
407 14th Avenue, SE
Puyallup, WA 98371
(206) 845-5187

Center for Independent Living in Central Florida, Inc. (CIL)

✓ JAS, ES

CIL is located in Winter Park, Florida. The CIL has several programs that have increased disability awareness as well as providing consumers with skills to obtain employment. OUTREACH is an integral part of the employment program. OUTREACH, in addition to regular mailings to 37 agencies and 76 employers, conducts a wide range of employment-related workshops, seminars, and represents CIL on a number of intergovernmental task forces. An example of OUTREACH activities is a Disability Awareness Seminar presented to 40 employees of Walt Disney World to heighten awareness and reduce disability stereotyping. The presentation addressed issues of accessibility, interviewing, etc., and utilized role playing scenarios, audio-visual tools, and a question and answer period. Follow-up questionnaire/evaluation results revealed high rating and increased job placements with Walt Disney World.

The employment program provides instruction for consumers in the areas of building self-confidence, writing cover letters and resumes, dressing for the job, interviewing techniques, and conducting a job search. These classes are, however, customized to meet consumers' unique needs and abilities. A total of 86 consumers participated in the employment program during the 1988-89 fiscal year. Consumers for whom full-time unsubsidized employment is not appropriate or feasible receive other assistance which includes referral to training and education opportunities, referral to other agencies providing OJT programs, and placement into a variety of work-study/volunteer positions.

The CIL believes the success of the program is reflected through increases in the hourly wage and the notable retention rate. Also, the CIL's efforts to educate the employment community regarding the benefits of hiring people with disabilities, and teaching consumers to advocate for themselves are important contributing factors.

For more information contact:

Edith Anderson Raby
Employment Manager
720 North Denning Drive
Winter Park, FL 32789
(407) 623-1070

Center for Independent Living of North Florida

✓ R, JDS, JAS, JPS

The Center for Independent Living of North Florida is an ILC located in Tallahassee, Florida and serves the 14 counties in the North Florida area. An employment program is offered through the transitory residential program. During the period in which consumers are in residence, the possibility of employment is carefully explored. Individual objectives are planned and established on a monthly basis. The objectives most often reflect a need for training and/or other support for successful employment (personal assistance services, transportation). Areas of focus include academic or occupational skills, work attitudes, job related behaviors and independence issues.

During the job search period each consumer establishes a self-directed job search program. This plan is supervised by Center staff and the vocational rehabilitation counselor. Support services are provided by the Center to help the consumer evaluate and review progress. Networking during the job search period is emphasized as is individual initiative on the part of the consumer.

Job placement success has been 82 percent over the past 10 years. Persons with quadriplegia have been primarily served, however, people with other severely disabling conditions have also participated.

For more information contact:

Bill Twomey
Executive Director
1380 Ocola Road, Building #4
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 575-9621

The Center for People with Disabilities

✓ **VI, HE, R, JTF, ES**

The Center for People with Disabilities is a large independent living center serving urban and rural areas of Colorado. It is a center with a wide range of community and employment services, a transitional living center, an attendant services program, a Latino and deaf language interpretation program, a blind senior program, an architectural barrier removal program, ADA consultations and disability awareness seminars.

The Employment/Community Service Program concentrates on facilitating relationships between the supervisor and the employee. Employers are assisted in properly supervising the employee/consumer. Meetings are set up for the consumer's support circle in order to develop plans for services and follow-up services. Consultations about job learning, essential functions, employment practice, reasonable accommodations and the creation of natural supports are key to the program's success. One hundred and twenty placements were made last year; with roughly 40 percent of those requiring supported employment activities. The employment retention rate is 70 percent.

The program is funded through a variety of federal, local, United Way, private contributions, and fees for services.

For more information contact:

Nan Hildebrand
Executive Director
948 North Street, Suite 7
Boulder, CO 80304

Chesire Home

✓ R, JPS, OST, JTF, ES

Chesire Home is a small comprehensive ILC serving an urban area in Florham Park, New Jersey. It is a residential facility funded by Medicaid.

The employment intervention used at the Center is Project SERVE (Success in Educational, Rehabilitation, and Vocational Endeavors). One component of the project deals with employability. Basic and Life Skills are taught within this component. Education planning is done, and a scholarship program may be utilized. The scholarship program pays for the client's college costs. There is also a computer resource center within the facility where computer skills are taught in support of career goals.

Another component of the intervention is the "vocational" segment. A vocational assessment is done outside the facility. Clients are then provided job coaching and job placement by staff. In-house work-stations such as receptionist and storekeeper are provided as work experience opportunities. The Center models what it preaches by hiring disabled staff. The project also acts as a broker for job finding. A network has been established where people call the project with available jobs. The project staff match positions with clients.

Project SERVE includes a community program called Project Change. In this program people with disabilities consult with employers and disabled employees to help them accommodate for the worksetting demands.

Funding for Project SERVE is totally dependent on donations. They have no problems in maintaining a successful level of funding.

Staff utilized in the employment intervention are an educational coordinator, teacher, and assistant teacher. The length of the program depends on the client.

For more information contact:

Leonard Recupero
Educational Coordinator
9 Ridgedale Avenue
Florham Park, NJ 07932
(201) 966-1232

Community Living Services for the Developmentally Disabled

✓ DD, R, JDS, JAS, JPS, JTF

Community Living Services for the Developmentally Disabled is a large center serving an urban area of Kansas. It provides both residential and nonresidential services. The Center has a preschool division, respite care, group home facilities, and prevocational and vocational programs. It is funded from county, state, and federal sources plus revenue from private tuitions.

Within the vocational program, both work adjustment and supported employment services are offered. Both job ready clients and clients without occupational skills are accepted into the program. If the client has no occupational skills s/he is either referred to vocational rehabilitation for training or is placed in a training area within the program. The program offers horticulture training and a work activity center.

If the client doesn't need occupational skills training s/he is placed in the prevocational program. While participating in the prevocational program they take job readiness classes which teach skills for completing job applications and job interviews.

After a job has been secured for the client a job coach is provided if needed. The job coach does a task analysis of the job and helps orient the client to the job. The job coach gradually decreases the time spent with the worker as s/he becomes more secure in the job. A full-time job coach is provided at one business in Kansas City where several clients are placed on a regular basis.

The client population served is the developmentally disabled. Only adults are accepted into the prevocational/vocational programs. Staff required for the program are a full-time job coach, part-time job coach, and a part-time job developer. The length of the program is based on individual needs.

For more information contact:

Cindy Piburn
Director of Adult Services
750 Cheyenne
Kansas City, KS 66105
(913) 621-1498

Courage Center

✓ R, GS

Courage Center is an independent living center serving Minnesota and surrounding states. It is a residential as well as a nonresidential facility.

The employability intervention used at this center involves vocational counseling as a core service available to all residents. The clients are assessed on a one-to-one basis by a counselor in the center. The clients are taught independent living skills. During the process of independent living skills development the client is provided with vocational counseling.

The State Vocational Rehabilitation Services provides a counselor to work as part of the interdisciplinary team. At the point the resident is ready to move from the Center, the goal is to have a vocational plan developed that can be carried out and funded by the State Rehabilitation Services counselor.

For more information contact:

Audrey Suker
Director, Vocational Services
3915 Golden Valley Road
Golden Valley, MN 55422
(612) 520-0551

Dawn Enterprises, Inc.

✓ **R, V, JDS, JAS, JPS, OST, JTF**

Dawn Enterprises is an independent living center in a rural part of Idaho serving eight of the northeastern counties of Idaho. It serves both residential and nonresidential clients. It is funded through the Department of Rehabilitation, Title VII, Part B grant.

The employment interventions used consist of job seeking skills training, job skills training, placement, on-the-job training, and job coaching.

The clients who come to the Center are evaluated in many independent living skills including job readiness skills. Those who need job readiness skills are given training in personal hygiene and appearance, job application skills, job interview skills and resume writing. The training is provided in accordance with the client's level of functioning.

Some clients who are referred to the Center are job ready. These clients are referred to the job placement specialist and are placed in jobs within the Center or in the community.

The Center itself has a Production Center that it uses for its training areas. Government contracts, a contract with the Navy, and a sewing contract provide assembly line work within the Center. The clients are given on-the-job training here. Once the client has completed training s/he has the option of being placed in a job in the community or staying on in the Production Center as an employee.

The Center also provides training in lawn care and custodial work. The Center has contracts with various government agencies to do their custodial work and lawn care. Clients trained in these areas are either placed in the community or remain with the Center for their employment.

A unique feature utilized by the Center is the Foster Grandparents (FGs) Program. This organization is very active in the community. The Center "hires" the FGs to help the clients. The pay is usually only enough to cover their expenses and they are actually considered volunteers. The FGs come into the Center and help the clients learn new tasks on the job. If a client is being given a different job and needs to learn a new task, the FG will come in and help him/her learn the new task. If the client progresses to a new job inside the Center, the FG will go with the client to help with the transition. They also go into the schools to help with the client's studies if needed. The FGs often help make it possible for a client to progress in a job.

The Center accepts persons with disabilities of all types. The time required to complete a program is based on individual needs. In addition to the volunteers the Center has 18 full-time staff consisting of job coaches, foremen, counselors, and evaluators.

For more information contact:

Lory Pugmire
ILR Coordinator
P. O. Box 388
Blackfoot, ID 83221

Disabled Resource Services

✓ DD, JAS, ES

Disabled Resource Services is an independent living center in Fort Collins, Colorado. The Center has developed two programs to support employment of people with disabilities: a supportive summer employment program and a traditional employment service.

The supportive summer employment program is specifically designed for youths aged 14 to 21, and initially targeted individuals with developmental disabilities. Today, this program serves all disability categories. A network is established between the employment site, job coach, and school personnel to incorporate a plan into the student's I.E.P that covers all the needs of the student. The initial projection for the program was to serve 10 students; the actual number of students served was 22. During 1989, 48 students were served and in 1990 approximately 40 students participated. Success of the youth employment program is attributed to good contact with school personnel, attitudinal barrier removal with employers, and the desire of the students to work. A grant from the Helen K. and Authur E. Johnson Foundation provides the extra monies for job coaches and adaptive equipment. Since its inception many local funding sources have been secured.

The second program initiated by Disabled Resource Services is the Traditional Employment Service. This service uses a one-on-one approach to enhance resume writing, interview skills, and job hunting. This program targets adults with disabilities.

For more information contact:

Patricia Frisbie
Employment Specialist
424 Pine St., #101
Fort Collins, CO 80524
(303)-482-2700
Hours: Monday - Thursday
8:30 a.m. - Noon
1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Down East Employment Services

✓ GS, JDS, JPS, JTF, ES

Sunrise Opportunities is a nonprofit organization which instructs and supports people with disabilities in work, recreation, and independent living in both Center-based and outreach programs. Down East Employment Services is the job placement program of that agency and is funded through the Bureau of Rehabilitation. All consumers must be accepted by the Bureau of Rehabilitation prior to initiation of services.

The Community Placement Specialist (CPS), Bureau of Rehabilitation Counselor, and the consumer all work closely in completing the steps necessary in the job placement process. An IWRP is developed once the consumer has been accepted by the Bureau of Rehabilitation. The CPS spends considerable time with the consumer, exploring the areas of interests, abilities, limitations, past work experiences, uncertainties about the work world, demands of a work environment and discussing acceptable and necessary work behaviors. The CPS contacts a variety of employers that would be suitable job matches for the consumer. Once a potential employer demonstrates an interest in the program, a task analysis is completed by the CPS to see if the job is appropriate. If appropriate, the application process for the job begins and the consumer follows the hiring process set forth by the employer. While the CPS is responsible for all aspects of the hiring process, the consumer is encouraged to participate as much as possible and has the final decision on any employment option.

Once the consumer has been offered a job, the CPS assists the consumer in payroll paper work, informs social security of any upcoming changes in income, and other work-related details that need to be finalized. The CPS provides on-the-job training and job coaching services to the new employee and consultation to the employer. Fade-out begins after the initial training period. After the consumer has been employed for 60 days the Bureau of Rehabilitation may close the case. The CPS develops a follow-up plan that allows the consumer and the employer to contact the agency for added assistance.

The success of this program is due to the close working relationship of the core team (i.e., Bureau of Rehabilitation Counselor, CPS, the employer, and the consumer).

For more information contact:

Karen S. Ayers
Community Placement Specialist
P. O. Box 384
Calais, ME 04619
(207) 454-7748

Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center

✓ GS, JDS, JAS, JPS, OST, ES

Vocational Programs

Easter Seal Center for Independent Living offers a variety of job training programs for disabled adults who wish to earn wages to support, or help support themselves. The programs operate on a variety of levels and serve people with a wide range of disabilities.

Vocational Services include evaluation and assessment of a participant's potential job skills, preparative training, finding a suitable placement based on these skills, on-site supervised training with an Easter Seal job coach, and a complete follow-along intervention. It is an Easter Seal Center for Independent Living policy to match closely the skills of the client with the needs of the particular employer. This way the disabled worker can feel competent and confident in his or her performance. This also helps ensure productivity for the employer. Easter Seal Centers for Independent Living vocational programs include both individual job placements and group placements, depending on the needs and skills of the disabled person.

Educational Programs

The Easter Seal Center for Independent Living offers different educational programs for adults with disabilities. All programs are designed to provide students with the necessary skills to challenge their cognitive abilities and meet their specific needs. Easter Seal knows that the completion of an educational program can mean newfound freedom to take on a new job or pursue another degree.

Adult Basic Education. A participant can utilize this program to develop new skills, or to review or relearn old ones. Curriculum includes problem solving, language and math. This program often serves as a springboard for the General Education Degree or computer training.

General Education Degree Training. This certified program helps prepare students with disabilities for the Graduate Equivalency Exam. This unique program is in keeping with the Center's Independent Living philosophy that people with disabilities are entitled to their own pursuits and goals. Program instructors come from the Department of Public Information.

Computer Training. State-of-the-art computer programs can be incorporated into any level of educational training.

For more information contact:

Rozie Zappo Cassidy
CIL Supervisor
61 Corporate Circle
New Castle Corporate Commons
New Castle, DE 19720-2405
(302) 324-4444

Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living

✓ PC

Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living is a large comprehensive independent living center in an urban area of Michigan. The employability intervention used by the Center is the Peer Support Service Program. It was developed by the Grand Rapids CIL. The program has been in existence for three years.

Persons with disabilities who live in the community are hired on a six-month contract to work in the Peer Support Service Program. The person must be someone who can serve as a role model, for example, working, involved in the community, and show evidence of being independent. The peer consultants work with the clients of the ILC in giving the clients support in prevocational areas or work longevity areas. They work on an individual basis or set up peer support groups with people with a variety of disabilities.

The peer consultant does not provide counseling or therapy. Even if a peer consultant is a professional in the counseling or therapy profession he does not act in a professional capacity as a peer. S/he is strictly identified as an individual or peer. Mainly, they are to act as role models to encourage the client in job related areas. Ongoing training is provided for the peer consultant. The peer consultants can request training in any area they wish.

The services are provided to organizations such as the State Rehabilitation Services on a fee-for-service basis. The Center itself is largely operated on a fee-for-service basis with additional money coming from grants and United Way.

The client population recommended for the Peer Support Service Program encompasses a wide variety of disabilities including the physical disabilities, mental retardation, and mental illness.

The permanent staff required for the Peer Support Service Program consists of one coordinator who maintains funding for the position by generating business for the program. Little is needed in the way of facilities as the peer support meetings can be conducted at various places such as churches and civic centers.

The formal program lasts from 8 to 16 weeks but participants often continue to maintain ties with peers after they have finished the scheduled meetings. The program has been very successful and has grown each year.

For more information contact:

Tom Leonard
CIL Program Coordinator
3375 S. Division
Grand Rapids, MI 49548
(616) 243-0846

Hope Haven Residential and Work Training Program

✓ MH, DD, R, GS, JDS, JAS, JPS, JTF, ES

The Hope Haven Residential and Work Training Program is not a multiple service independent living center. The program deals exclusively in the provision of residential and employment services. It is funded via purchase of service agreements with various state agencies including the State Vocational Rehabilitation program. The employment program may be described in five process elements: (a) facilitating employment goal clarification, (b) specifying skill development and support needs, (c) providing and/or arranging for skill development and support needs, (d) placement in a selected work setting and (e) non-time bound provision of employment support services.

The target population of the program is primarily persons with developmental disabilities and chronic mental health disabilities. The program director describes the program consumers as those who are very severely disabled and those who, not long ago, would not have considered, or been considered for employment. The program emphasizes the highest level of employment as well as employment that is consistent with the person's values and needs.

The New Haven program has been in operation for 25 years and is a rather large program serving around 250 persons at any one time. The program director has been associated with ILC services previously, and the current program appears to be consistent with the independent living philosophy. The program has a wealth of experience in long-term postplacement supportive activities and in working with employers within both the supported work and competitive work models. The program's methods of working with consumers to determine work values/goals may also be of interest

For further information contact:

Lloyd Vanderkwaak
Director of Client Services
1800 19th Street
Rock Valley, Iowa 51247
(712) 476-2737

IMPACT Center for Independent Living

✓ JDS, JAS, JPS, ES

IMPACT is a nonprofit, community-based Center for Independent Living located in Alton, Illinois. It is a large Center with 18 staff serving a predominantly rural area (under 50,000 population). IMPACT is funded by the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services and United Way.

IMPACT, through a Vocational Rehabilitation grant, has developed a few approaches to employment intervention. The first is called Job Seeking Skills. This intervention is conducted on an individualized basis. There are 10-15 participants served within the program. The focus of the program is to assist consumers in becoming job ready. Consumers are taught interview skills, resume development, application development and interviewing techniques. The consumer continues the program until his/her individual needs are met. Job Seeking Skills are taught onsite at IMPACT. Two staff (job coaches) are primarily utilized for the program.

An additional intervention, Job Placement and Development, was started at IMPACT in October of 1991. IMPACT staff talk with potential employers about the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities and employers' responsibilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act. When jobs are developed, job-ready consumers are placed in these positions.

In order to participate in both interventions, consumers must be clients of the Department of Rehabilitation Services. If a referral is received who is not a rehabilitation client, the person is then referred to the Department of Rehabilitation Services by IMPACT.

The staff utilized in this program are two job coaches who are on the staff of IMPACT. The program itself is designed to be very individualized. There is no time limit. IMPACT can work with consumers under this program for as long as they need services.

The IMPACT staff report that the Job Seeking Skills program has been very successful. They anticipate good results from the new Job Placement and Development Program.

For more information contact:

Cathy Contarino
Program Director
2735 E. Broadway
Alton, IL 62002

Independent Skills Program

✓ HE, JAS, JPS, JTF

The Independent Skills Program is an independent living center based in Garden Grove, California. The Center has developed and implemented two employment related programs primarily targeting individuals with hearing impairments. The Center works with the Orange County Department of Education, Regional Occupation Programs, Goodwill Industries and others to develop community cooperative training programs for individuals who will be graduating from high school and others who are not yet ready for full-time work. These arrangements assist the student in transitioning more successfully into the work place.

The Prevocational Program assists individuals who are age 18 or above through employment interview skills training and resume writing. The Job Retention Program assists consumers on an individual basis with difficulties that may arise on-the-job.

Job placement success for these programs is five to six consumers a year. The Center reports that, to operate a program such as this, a Center must be able to establish learning situations geared to the individual needs of the student.

For more information contact:

Joan MacDonald
Lead Instructor
12051 West Street
Garden Grove, CA 92640
(714) 750-5368

Jespy, Inc.

✓ R, JDS, JPS, OST, JTF

Jespy, Inc., is a large independent living center in an urban part of New Jersey. It serves both residential and nonresidential clients. Funding is provided by the state, private tuition, and fees for services.

The employment intervention is basically the same for all the clients. During orientation the clients meet with the vocational staff who determine what general program the client is best suited for. There is a six person vocational team that guides and directs the client. The team consists of the evaluator, job developer, vocational counselor, and three job coaches. Some clients are placed in volunteer positions or part-time positions until they are ready for a full-time job.

No formal vocational training is provided at the Center but they do have a small subcontracting work area to which clients can be assigned. The Center does provide instruction in computer skills.

The Center has a Business Advisory Board. This board is important in that through it the Center is able to identify job possibilities throughout the community as possible placement opportunities for the clients.

The program may vary in length based on individual needs. Residential clients are usually there for two to four years, and follow-up for clients can continue indefinitely.

The program has been very successful. Out of 100 Center clients, 85 are employed.

For more information contact:

Lynn Kucher, M.A.
Executive Director
65 Academy Street
South Orange, NJ 07079

Mainstream Living

✓ V, DD, JDS, JAS, OST, JTF, ES

Mainstream Living is an independent living center in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Center offers two programs that deal with employment issues.

The supportive employment program serves all disability types, yet largely focuses on visual impairments and developmental disabilities. The program is a traditional supportive employment effort that involves solicitation of possible job sites, employer education about job accommodations and employer benefits, task analysis, and on-the-job training. Funding is provided through the State Division of Rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, and the Social Security Administration's Individual Work Related Expense Plan and the Plan to Achieve Self-support.

The second employment program is integrated with the independent living services and education programs offered through the Center. Through the general independent living program, people with disabilities receive one-on-one counseling about employment with emphasis on networking, resumé writing, job hunting, interviewing skills, and job retention. The education program encompasses all of the above skills in a group setting for people with all disabilities. The education program is partially funded through enrollment fees. The independent living program does not receive any special funding for this employment service.

Success of these programs can be attributed to a job hunting club through the supportive employment program which permits any consumer to participate. The supportive employment program has a success rate of 50 percent in job placement and retention.

For further information, contact:

Richard Petty
Executive Director
or Kathy Estill
IL Services Coordinator
1501 Main Street, Suite 111
Little Rock, AR 72202
(501) 371-0012

Motivational Services, Inc.

✓ **MH, PC, GS, JPS, OST, JTF**

Community Support Services, a component of Motivational Services, Inc., operates an independent living center in Augusta, Maine. The Center operates a large employment program called Work Opportunities Rehabilitative Choices (WORC). WORC is comprised of many different elements: supportive employment, job coaching, presupportive employment (in which the consumer explores employment options), postsupportive employment, peer support group, and job placement services. In the WORC program the consumers served are people diagnosed as chronically mentally ill. The Center has seven full-time staff. To qualify for the WORC program, consumers must qualify for services through the Bureau of Rehabilitation.

The Center believes that establishing strong relationships with other employment vendors, and having an extensive knowledge of the community employment and employment related systems are the keys to providing successful employment services.

For more information contact:

Gary Mascher
Director, Vocational Services
114 State Street
Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 626-3480

New Vistas Independent Living Center (NVILC)

✓ GS, JDS, JAS, JPS, OST, JTF, ES

NVILC is located in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Center offers employment related services and has two components: one for the employers and one for the consumers. NVILC staff provide educational presentations to prospective employers which include disability awareness, vocational implications of disabilities, the purpose and use of assistive/adaptive devises, the purpose and need for accommodations on the job, current disability related legislation affecting the employer, and other related services which might be needed by the employer and his/her employees. NVILC is available to conduct surveys to assist the employer to identify, modify and/or eliminate architectural, procedural and attitudinal barriers to the employment and advancement of people with disabilities.

The job development staff interview prospective referrals to determine eligibility for services. Job development staff analyze pertinent medical and psychological reports, vocational evaluation reports, and/or work adjustment reports in order to develop services to maximize the consumer's employment opportunities, job performance, job satisfaction, and job retention. A written placement plan is developed by the job development staff and the consumer. Services such as job readiness, vocational counseling or situational assessments might be included in the work plan. Once a job opportunity has been developed, offered, and accepted, (but prior to actual commencement of employment) the job development staff help the consumer to become familiarized with the job site, job duties, personnel benefits, rates of pay, and employment policies/ procedures. During placement and follow-up procedures, job development staff coordinate with other ILC staff and other involved community agencies to provide the full range of vocational or IL support necessary for a successful placement.

This program is funded through a "fee-for-service" schedule. It serves all disability types. The program's success is attributed to consumer control, the extensive networking with other agencies, and the education of potential employers.

For more information contact:

Patrick K. Herrick
Program Manager
2025 S. Pacheco, Suite 105-A
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 471-1001

Northern Regional Center for Independent Living

✓ JAS, ES

The Northern Regional Center for Independent Living is a small, non-residential center serving a rural area of New York State.

The employment intervention used by the Center is a Supported Employment Advocacy Program whose advocates interact with various businesses and organizations in the area to provide information on employment of people with disabilities. The program provides education, awareness and advocacy within the educational community. Advocates work with parents, children and young adults in planning realistic and challenging programs which address positive vocational goals and outcomes.

The advocates also help with problems that may occur within a family when a person with a disability returns to or begins work. Advocates work with both the individual and the family to resolve issues which may have arisen as a result of employment such as changes in benefits, roles played by family members, independence, and many other issues unique to each family.

The Center works with individuals to assist them in gaining skills to fill out job applications and participate in job interviews. The Center does not have a placement program but, because of a shortage of staff at the rehabilitation agency in the area, the Center helps consumers identify possible job placement.

The Supported Employment Advocacy Program has one full-time supported employment advocate, and two other staff who work part-time as advocates. The program does not have a specified length of time as it is based on individual needs.

For more information contact:

Catharine Keane
Executive Director
Watertown Independent Living Center
Suite 400, Woolworth Building
Watertown, NY 13601
(315) 785-8703

PARAQUAD

✓ HE, JDS, JAS, JPS, ES

PARAQUAD is an independent living center in St. Louis, Missouri. The high unemployment rate among people with disabilities in competitive employment (87%) was a major factor in motivating PARAQUAD to initiate a three component employment program. The program is specifically designed for people who have physical disabilities or a hearing impairment. PARAQUAD staff utilize sign language as well as interpreters to correct or prevent problems that might be encountered in the workplace.

The career counseling component utilizes career counselors who provide pertinent information about attitudinal and physical barriers that people with disabilities may face when applying for employment. The career counselors, who are disabled themselves, assist individuals in learning job seeking skills for competitive employment in the areas of resume writing, completing job applications, networking, and particularly with interviewing skills to prepare people with disabilities to effectively communicate skills and abilities as well as to break through any attitudinal barriers employers may have concerning persons with disabilities.

Another component is corporate consultation which is accomplished through individual and group sessions. The purpose of the consultations is to educate top managers, supervisors and employees in regard to integration of people with disabilities into the work setting, and to help them understand and utilize the individual's abilities.

The third component is an employment reference system. This system is a referral network that enables the Center to match qualified applicants with jobs that are available in the community.

PARAQUAD established this program in 1987 through a grant from the Gannett Foundation.

For further information, contact:

Linda Baker Oberst
Director of Independent Living Specialists
4475 Castleman
St. Louis, MO 63110
(314) 776-4475

Progressive Independence

✓ GS, JAS, JPS

Progressive Independence is a nonresidential independent living center serving an urban area of Oklahoma. It is funded through state and federal monies, United Way and private donations.

The Center provides a case manager to coordinate the consumer's employment program. Clients are assessed and a career plan is developed. If education and/or training are needed prior to employment the client is referred to an area vocational technical school, the vocational rehabilitation program, or other appropriate programs to develop proper skills. The Center also works closely with local employment agencies for referral information.

Before the client is job ready s/he participates in an independent living skills program. Clients are taught job application, interview, and job finding skills. Clients are instructed in presenting the disability and appropriate work behavior. The Center does networking with other providers to locate jobs.

A unique feature of the Progressive Independence Center's employability intervention is their Employee Forum. This is a forum where all the clients who are not employed are requested to attend. It is held for one hour, once a month. The clients meet and discuss what they have been doing to get a job. They share job openings they know about, encourage each other, and give suggestions on what they might need to do to find a job. It is an informative situation for the clients as well as a source of encouragement.

The clients involved in this program are those who will be able to work. The program staff consists primarily of four case managers. The center director and clerical staff also contribute to the program. The length of the program depends on the individual.

For more information contact:

Lee Ann Paige
Independent Living Skills Coordinator
121 North Porter
Norman, OK 73070
(405) 321-3203

The Resource Center for Accessible Living (RCAL)

✓ GS, JDS, JPS, OST

RCAL is an independent living center in Kingston, New York. The Center has developed an entry-level clerical internship program in conjunction with Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities, and Gateway Community Industries, Inc. RCAL provides the space, equipment, materials for training, the work, and the staff to train and supervise the program participants. In addition, assessments are generated by the RCAL supervisor in order to evaluate the consumer. Gateway Community Industries provides diagnostic vocational evaluations and a subsequent personal adjustment internship to consumers entering the clerical internship program. Gateway also provides vocational counseling and placement services.

A diagnostic vocational evaluation is given to prospective consumers by Gateway's Evaluation Center. If the consumer meets the criteria for the clerical internship program, Gateway then assumes responsibility in the role of vocational consultant. One personal adjustment training instructor is assigned to the identified consumers. This allows the supervisor at RCAL and the personal adjustment training instructor to develop a close working relationship resulting in each consumer having all needed services identified and provided. The personal adjustment training instructor provides vocational counseling, and assesses vocational strengths and weaknesses. The Gateway placement counselor aides in seeking competitive employment sites for job-ready consumers. If the consumer is not job-ready, an option of entering Gateway's sheltered workshop is given. Consumers may also access the clerical intern program through Patients Accelerated for Community Employment, or through Green Thumb. Both of these programs provide their own vocational counseling and placement services.

All consumers in the diagnostic vocational evaluation and subsequent personal adjustment training at RCAL are sponsored by Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities. This program is successful because of the close working relationship of RCAL, Gateway Industries, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

For more information contact:

Wendy Rolnick
Clerical Intern Supervisor
602 Albany Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401
(914) 331-0541
(914) 331-8680/TDD

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS)

✓ PC, ES

SAILS is an independent living center in San Antonio, Texas. The employment program is entitled SAILS/Job Lead Services, and offers services to both consumers and employers. The Center considers the whole person and his/her environment. Consequently, there are two components to the program: one for the employer and one for the consumer. The employers are offered job listings for their openings in a Job Opportunity Bank, job matching information, referrals suited to their needs, and consultation. The consultation aspect of the program includes job analysis, reasonable accommodation, on-the-job needs of employees with disabilities, accessibility surveys, communications (signing) training for co-workers, co-worker awareness and assistive devices. SAILS provides sensitive attention to the employer's needs and questions.

The quality employment services offered to consumers are the job opportunity bank, job readiness training, job club activities, and independent living support. Through the independent living support consumers receive independent living skills training, consumer information and referral, counseling in the areas of personal, attendant care and transportation, housing assistance, assistive devices needs and maintenance, and social/recreational opportunities. Since 10 of 12 SAILS employees are people with disabilities, the Center is able to provide peer consultation to consumers. The Center serves all disabilities.

The success of the program is due largely to the Center's providing employers with referrals who have enough control over their lives to respond successfully if given the opportunity to work. SAIL's goal is to link employers with responsible, employable people with disabilities.

For more information contact:

Larry Correu
Executive Director
5101 San Pedro Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78212
(512) 734-9971 Voice/TDD

Self Initiated Living Options, Inc. (SILO)

✓ V, GS, JAS

SILO is a nonresidential independent living center in a suburban/rural area of New York. It is funded mainly (87%) by a state contract. It also receives funds from United Way and from fund drives initiated by the Center.

The program at the Center is consumer driven. When a consumer comes into the Center s/he requests the services s/he views as needed. The Center then provides those particular services to the consumer. Consumers who request some type of work related skills training are referred for employment counseling. There they are assigned to an employment counselor who helps them in whatever work related areas they request. Consumers are given help in determining what is the responsibility of the consumer as an employee as opposed to what is the employer's responsibility. Other options offered include resume writing, role-playing job interviews, and exploring relationships with bosses and co-workers. Information and training are also provided on other issues associated with employment such as engaging the services of a personal attendant, or obtaining transportation to and from the job.

The consumer recommended for the program is the job-ready consumer with any kind of disability. The employment intervention uses one staff member. The Center utilizes 15 volunteers to help consumers who have special needs such as sign language. The length of time a consumer remains in the program depends on his/her needs and abilities.

For more information contact:

June Roberts
Executive Director
3241 Route 112, Building 7, Suite 2
Medford, NY 11763
(516) 698-1310

Services for Independent Living

✓ JAS

Services for Independent Living serves both rural and urban areas of mid-Missouri. The Center's employment intervention is a program based on the individual needs of the consumer. When a consumer comes to the Center and is ready for employment s/he is given instruction in job seeking skills, such as completing the job application and job interviewing. Consumers are encouraged to seek employment in areas in which they are interested. Staff encourage consumers to find their own employment, but will help if they know of something available in the area.

When a consumer comes to the Center and wants to work but needs evaluation and/or vocational training, the Center refers the consumer to Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

The Center serves consumers with any type of disability. The consumers remain in the program as long as needed, or until they gain employment. The program receives Title VII, Part B funding. The Center has 12 full time and 5 part-time employees.

For more information contact:

Mr. Lee Henson
Executive Director
1301 Vandiver Drive, Suite Q
Columbia, MO 65202
(314) 874-1646

Together Place

✓ MS, GS, JDS, JPS, OST, JTF

Together Place is an independent living center located in Bangor, Maine. Together Place has several employment interventions that have been successful.

A Presupported Employment Service is offered to those who have been hospitalized for a mental health disability or have had recent professional crisis counseling. The service has two components. A Mobile Work Crew performs seasonal work tasks such as sorting blueberries and seeding trees. No more than eight individuals are supervised by each job coach. The second component is individualized placement at an agency owned restaurant. The participants carry out a variety of work activities (e.g., dish washing, baking, prep work, clean-up).

A Supported Placement Service is another employment intervention provided by the Center. To be eligible for this service one must be a client of the State Bureau of Rehabilitation. Supported Placement Services include preplacement, placement, and postplacement. Under preplacement services the employment coordinator works as part of the vocational case management team to help prospective workers select a job compatible with his/her interests, goals, abilities, and previous experience.

Placement Services occurs after the employment coordinator has developed one, or often several, positions from which a person may choose. Employment services at this stage are four-fold: (a) skill development for a particular job; (b) assessment of employee's job performance; (c) support planning; and (d) service coordination in which arrangements are made for resources necessary for success and satisfaction on the job.

Postplacement services are provided to individuals when Rehabilitation Services closes the individual as no longer requiring their funded placement and supported employment services. Postplacement services are offered, as funding permits, through Together Place. They are provided to support an employee's efforts to maintain employment. Services may include retraining if an employee decides to change positions at the place of employment.

Transitional Employment Position (TEP) is yet another employability intervention offered. TEP is a competitive work opportunity in an integrated setting for those individuals who may need support services to perform a job that is not a permanent employment placement. In those cases where a former presupported employment client is in the process of finding a job through the

supported placement services, the TEP eliminates the employment gap which sometimes occurs while a person is involved in the job development/matching process.

Together Place has printed information on their services.

For more information contact:

Roger Griffith
Director
150 Union Street
Bangor, Maine 04401
(207) 941-2907

Urban/Rural Center for Independent Living of Michigan Commission for the Blind

✓ **VI, HE, JAS, JTF**

The Urban/Rural Center for Independent Living of Michigan Commission for the Blind is a nonresidential independent living center serving both a rural and urban area of Michigan. The Center does not have a specific program for employability, but intervenes when necessary to facilitate employment.

The Center serves clients with multiple severe disabilities of deafness and blindness, concentrating on congenital disabilities. It is referred to as a Center without walls. The staff usually go to the clients as most of them are nondrivers.

The Center receives Title VII, Part B, and A funding. It operates with two staff, an independent living specialist and a university intern. The clients usually remain in the program about a year, but actual time is based on individual needs. The Center works in collaboration with the Commission for Vocational Rehabilitation--Blind Division.

The Center concentrates its efforts on multiply severely handicapped clients who have not been able to receive services elsewhere. The client who has disabilities of deafness and blindness and is in an adult foster care or nursing facility is moved into a setting of choice and either helped to use existing skills, or trained in some kind of job skills. The Center provides supplies to start a client in a job such as chair caning, or will place the client on a job with supported employment. Communication aid is provided once the client is employed.

The program has been very successful in providing opportunities to people who would otherwise have none.

For more information contact:

Cindy Caldwell
Independent Living Specialist
201 N. Washington Square
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 373-9415

Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

✓ VI, V, JDS, JAS, ES

The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a non-profit independent living center serving the state of Vermont. All of the clients of the Center have a visual impairment, with 47 percent having a secondary disability. The Center is funded by federal grants, state contracts, and private donations.

The employability intervention is administered on an individual basis to the job ready client. Volunteer drivers assist the clients in job search endeavors. The client is given assistance in completing job applications and any other necessary forms. Services are coordinated through the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Once the client has obtained a job, assistance is given in securing transportation to and from the job. The Center does not provide the transportation once a job has been found. Also, once the job has been obtained, the Center helps the client and the employer by transforming any needed job instruction, manuals, etc., into Braille or audio tapes.

The Center itself hires qualified individuals with disabilities. All services are provided on an itinerant basis. The Center has 16 staff members who spend part of their time providing rehabilitation skills training and education.

For more information contact:

Jules Coté
Executive Director
37 Elmwood Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 863-1358

Vision Foundation, Inc.

✓ VI, V, JDS

Vision Foundation, Inc., (VISION) is not an independent living center but a grass-roots, nonprofit organization that primarily serves individuals with vision loss. There are two programs offered through VISION that deal with employment. The first program is the Visually Impaired Volunteer Program which provides unpaid work experience for newly blind and visually impaired individuals. Volunteers prepare themselves for employment while helping others, often learning new skills and/or regaining self-confidence. In many cases this experience leads to employment at VISION or a return-to-work program elsewhere, including employment held before vision loss.

The second program is the Career Mentor Program which matches job-ready individuals with employed visually impaired people for the purpose of providing practical and emotional support. Both programs are viewed as successful. The success is attributed to the self-help approach taken by VISION. The programs are available to people who are not legally blind. VISION supports the extensive use of the sharing process through sponsorship of over 20 self-help support groups. Free in-home service for elders to adjust to vision loss, an information center, outreach services, and publications are available.

For further information, contact:

Fran Weisse
Manager, Information Center
818 Mt. Auburn Street
Watertown, MA 02172
(617) 926-4232
(800) 852-3029 (MA only)

The Whole Person, Inc.

✓ V, OST

The Whole Person, Inc., an independent living center in Kansas City, does not have a formal and budgeted employment program but reports one approach they have found to be effective. The Center's volunteer coordinator recruits people with disabilities from the community to provide volunteer services at the Center. The volunteers receive on-the-job training in some occupational area(s) (e.g., data entry, filing) and develop competence in the area. Many of these volunteers have transitioned into competitive employment from their volunteer position. It is noteworthy that many of the people successfully participating in the program had been deemed nonfeasible for employment by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Center is willing to answer questions about the services.

For more information contact:

Deborah Herr
Executive Director
6301 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64131
(816) 361-0304

References

Means, B. L., & Bolton, B. (1992). A national survey of employment services provided by independent living programs. ***The Journal of Rehabilitation, 58(4), 22-26***.

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Department of Rehabilitation Education and Research
Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation
Post Office Box 1358
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71902